

Sumathipala¹ on the value of performing biopsies in genitourinary clinics.

We would like to share our experience at the Melbourne STD Centre. During the period August 1988 to October 1990, 53 biopsies were performed. The main indication for biopsy was atypical wart-like lesions. Of 27 such lesions biopsied 15 were confirmed as human papilloma virus infection, five were reported as seborrhoeic keratosis, four were Bowenoid papulosis, one scar tissue, one skin tag and one compound naevus. Although five of these patients were regular sexual partners of women with cervical intraepithelial neoplasia no cases of penile intraepithelial neoplasia were identified. More recently we have started doing HPV typing on these samples. Of three cases tested one was positive for HPV type 16/18, the other two were negative. Many patients with atypical lesions are very keen to know whether or not they have a virus which may put their sexual partners at the risk of developing cervical neoplasia. We were very happy to be able to reassure at least eight patients that they had no evidence of human papilloma virus infection and in four others with Bowenoid papulosis we were able to plan more definitive therapy and ensure careful follow up.

We had nine cases of Lichen sclerosus et atrophicus. Of these five had significant phimosis and were referred for circumcision. Two had severe ulceration which healed with conservative treatment.

There were three cases each of dermatitis and psoriasis, and two cases each of lichen planus and circinate balanitis. Both the pigmented lesions biopsied were reported as benign lentigo. The diagnosis was erythroplasia of Queyrat in one case and non specific changes were seen in four cases.

We have found biopsy to be a very useful and safe diagnostic tool in the venereologist's armoury.

S YOGANATHAN
D S JACOBS
Melbourne Sexually Transmitted
Diseases Centre,
364 Lt Lonsdale Street,
Melbourne 3000,
Australia

1 Arumanayagam JT, Sumathipala AHT. Value of performing biopsies in genitourinary clinics. *Genitourin Med* 1990;66:407.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Medical Management of AIDS. Edited by MA Sande and PA Volberding. Philadelphia, Saunders (Pp 436; Price £30) 1990.

This book provides a great deal more than the title suggests. The contents are neither confined to AIDS nor to its medical management, with chapters on topics such as strategies for preventing HIV transmission, host immunological responses to HIV, and risks of occupational transmission comprising some of the best written reviews. Even the chapters on specific AIDS conditions include considerable background details of epidemiology, microbiology and the natural history of these diseases.

Although 41 authors contributed to this work, the style remains clear and well organised throughout. There is some inevitable repetition of some basic points, such as the discovery of HIV and the role of cells bearing CD4 receptors in the pathogenesis of infection. However, these are minor irritants in a generally well-written and eminently readable text on which the editors are to be congratulated.

Several features do serve as drawbacks to this book. Firstly, the overwhelming use of North American references with the exclusion of much (sometimes conflicting) work from elsewhere. Furthermore, transatlantic differences in the use of certain therapies (eg Foscarnet in CMV disease) are not acknowledged or discussed. Secondly, despite the preface note that the book had been published within only 6 months, the pace of change has resulted in a few obvious deficiencies, such as the role of steroids in the treatment of PCP. The solitary page of unremarkable colour illustrations at the front of the book could have been dispensed with to reduce the cost of the book without any effect on its quality.

Overall, this book provides a clear overview of the entire subject of HIV infection and AIDS which should appeal to a wide readership of all those wishing to update and close gaps in their knowledge of these conditions.

The numerous algorithms proposed for the investigation and therapy of early HIV disease, various clinical presentations and individual opportunistic infections are of particular interest and should stimulate thought and debate amongst all physicians involved in the care of patients with HIV infection and AIDS.

SIMON BARTON

Promoting Safer Sex. Edited by Maria Paalman (Pp 252; Price Dfl52.50). Amsterdam: Swets and Zeitlinger, 1990. ISBN 90-265-1012-0.

This is a book which should, at least in parts, interest all doctors and other health professionals in the field of sexually transmitted diseases. We all have the responsibility of trying to prevent the sexual transmission of HIV and other STDs. As such, we require some grounding in the arts of health promotion. This book, subtitled *Prevention of Sexual Transmission of AIDS and Other STD*, helps to provide this grounding. Anyone who is sufficiently interested to pick up the book will almost certainly find much that is already familiar, but also find other sections illuminating.

Maria Paalman has drawn together twelve formal presentations and summaries of twelve workshops from the First International Workshop on the prevention of STD and AIDS, held in The Netherlands in May 1989. (The Second International Workshop is being held in Cambridge in March 1991). Among the presenters were Jonathan Mann, Andre Meheus and Peter Piot. Topics covered in the presentations include "Screening and Case Finding in the Prevention and Control of STD's and HIV Infection", "The Role of Contact Tracing in Prevention", and "The Role of Community-based Organisations in AIDS and STD Prevention".

I was particularly interested in the presentation "Fear and Humour in Prevention Campaigns". The use of fear as a motivator for changing behaviour has apparently been seriously studied for the last 40 years.